

Claims

1. A multimedia apparatus comprising a receiver to receive primary program data and associated secondary program data from a communication channel, a data storage medium and a data processor operable to record the primary program data and the associated secondary program data on the data storage medium, provide a user interface for selection of the program data files and retrieve a secondary program data file selected by a viewer for display.
2. A multimedia apparatus as in claim 1 operable to record the primary and secondary program data when received contemporaneously by the receiver.
3. A multimedia apparatus as in claim 1, wherein the secondary program data comprises promotional material selected from the group comprising forms: audio, video, pictures, text and graphics.
4. A multimedia apparatus as in claim 1, where the primary program data and secondary program data are in the form of MPEG-2 files.
5. A multimedia apparatus as in claim 1, where the secondary program data is of a lower resolution than that of the primary program data.
6. A multimedia apparatus as in claim 1 wherein the processor is operable to selectively allow marking of the primary program data for deletion or prolonged keeping upon user input during display of the secondary program data.
7. A set top box comprising a multimedia apparatus as in claim 1.
8. A multimedia apparatus as in claim 1 further including a display device to display the primary and secondary data retrieved from the storage medium.

9. A multimedia apparatus comprising a receiver to receive primary program data from a communication channel, a data storage medium, a data processor operable to record primary program data on the storage medium, run a software agent arranged to compile an associated secondary program data file,
5 provide a user interface for selection of the stored program data files and retrieve a secondary program file selected by a viewer for display.

10. A multimedia apparatus as in claim 9 wherein the processor is operable to identify portions of the primary program data that have been earmarked and
10 store a copy of said earmarked data in the associated secondary program data file.

11. A multimedia apparatus as in claim 10 wherein the software agent is operable to replace at least a portion of audio data in the secondary program data with audio data from tertiary program data received by the receiver from the
15 communication channel.

12. A multimedia apparatus as in claim 9 wherein the primary program data and secondary program data are in the form of MPEG-2 files.

20 13. A multimedia apparatus as in claim 9 wherein the secondary program data is of a lower resolution than that of the primary program data.

14. A set top box comprising a multimedia apparatus as in claim 9.

25 15. A multimedia apparatus as in claim 9 further including a display device to display the primary and secondary data retrieved from the storage medium.

30 16. A method of providing access to program data held in a storage medium within a multimedia apparatus comprising receiving primary program data and associated secondary program data from a communication channel, storing said primary program data and the associated secondary program data, providing a user interface for selection of the stored program data and retrieving secondary program data selected by a viewer for display.

17. A method as in claim 16 including receiving the secondary program data in parallel with the primary program content.

5 18. A method as in claim 16 where the secondary program data comprises promotional material in one or more of the following forms: audio, video, pictures, text or graphics.

10 19. A method as in claim 16 where the primary program data and secondary program data are in the form of MPEG-2 files.

20. A method as in claim 16 where the secondary program data is of a lower resolution than that of the primary program data.

15 21. A method of providing access to program data held in a storage medium within a multimedia apparatus comprising receiving primary program data from a communication channel, storing the primary program data on a data storage medium, running a software application so as to compile associated secondary program data from the primary data, and selectively retrieving the secondary
20 program data for display.

22. A method as in claim 21 including identifying earmarked portions of the primary program data and compiling the secondary program data from said portions.

25 23. A method as in claim 22 including replacing at least a portion of audio data in the secondary program data with audio data from tertiary program data received by the receiver from the communication channel.

30 24. A method as in claim 21 where the secondary program data comprises promotional material in one or more of the following forms: audio, video, pictures, text or graphics.

25. A method as in claim 21 where the primary program data and secondary program data are in the form of MPEG-2 files.

5 26. A method as in claim 21 where the secondary program data is of a lower resolution than that of the primary program data.

10 27. A multimedia apparatus comprising a receiver, to receive primary program data from a communication channel, a data storage medium and a data processor operable to record the primary program data on the data storage medium together with a file of associated secondary program data, compile a menu of the stored secondary program data files and retrieve a secondary program data file selected by a viewer for display.